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Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7723rd meeting
Wednesday, 22 June 2016, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Xu Zhongsheng
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Shearman
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Méndez Graterol

Agenda

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

Report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its ninth session (S/2016/115)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

Report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its ninth session (S/2016/115)

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: His Excellency Mr. Olof Skoog, Permanent Representative of Sweden and former Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission; and His Excellency Mr. Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya and Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/115, which conttains the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its ninth session.

I now give the floor to Mr. Skoog.

Mr. Skoog: I am pleased to be here today on behalf of the members of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to present the annual report of the Commission on its ninth session, as contained in document S/2016/115.

We meet during the Peacebuilding Week, at one of several timely opportunities to discuss next steps in terms of implementing the resolutions on sustaining peace, adopted almost two months ago. I look forward to the informal interactive dialogue with members of the Security Council following this briefing and to the PBC annual session tomorrow. The two groundbreaking resolutions emanating from the review of the peacebuilding architecture provide an excellent basis and strong impetus for an enhanced role of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as a strengthened relationship with the Council.

I will now turn to the task at hand of presenting the activities and achievements of the PBC during 2015. The ninth session of the PBC coincided with the first phase of the review of the peacebuilding architecture, which inspired the work of the Commission. Over the past year, we have taken what I believe are important steps to improve the effectiveness and flexibility of the Peacebuilding Commission, striving always to further enhance the relevance of our work, broaden the scope and reach of our efforts, and improve the accountability of the Commission. This includes adopting more transparent and strategic working methods and a more flexible agenda, increasing inclusivity, improving partnerships with regional and subregional organizations, and highlighting peacebuilding needs in the Ebola recovery.

I should like to highlight three particular areas of progress from the annual report, and also pass on some reflections on how this work can be built on and leveraged in light of the review.

First, regarding the flexibility and effectiveness of the work of the Commission, during its ninth session the PBC was able to leverage the inherent flexibility of the Commission to convene regional and country-specific discussions concerning situations beyond the PBC's established agenda. The Organizational Committee had opportunities to discuss peacebuilding needs and lessons learned in several contexts, such as the peace process in Papua New Guinea, the elections in Burkina Faso and financing for peacebuilding in Somalia. Going forward, this work can and should be further expanded. In my view, there is great scope for the Commission to keep evolving in this regard. The resolutions adopted in April give the PBC a clear mandate to continue diversifying its working methods in support of sustaining peace.

Secondly, on regional issues, the Commission has over the past year moved to highlight thematic and regional issues of relevance to its work. For example, to draw attention to the peacebuilding needs within the Ebola recovery, building on the successful work of my predecessor, a the PBC Chair undertook a trip to West Africa. I am very happy that a similar visit to the region was carried out by the current Chair in the past two weeks.

Furthermore, a regional discussion on trends and threats to peacebuilding in West Africa was convened at the beginning of this year, at which Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman, Head of the Department of Political Affairs, was invited to identify conflict-prevention priorities and inform the Commission's work in the region. Again, it is encouraging that the Peacebuilding Commission is already building on what was started during previous sessions, with additional regional discussions convened at this session.

The Commission should further use the momentum from the reviews to deepen and institutionalize cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, both in the Commission as a whole and in the country-specific work. The fundamental peacebuilding and conflict-prevention work carried out in particular by the regional economic communities is something the PBC can better link with in its advocacy work and accompaniment. In a similar vein, the PBC is well placed to listen to and incorporate local perspectives and bringi such understandings and approaches to peacebuilding to the fore.

Thirdly, regarding inclusivity, few bodies at the United Nations have a mandate to interact with and draw upon the expertise of such a wide range of actors as does the Peacebuilding Commission. During the ninth session, the Commission worked to advance interaction with a more diverse group of actors. The drafting of a gender strategy for the Peacebuilding Commission was initiated, which will help the Commission to systematize the way it works on gender issues and to put the empowerment of women at the core of the work.

A special session was organized to discuss how to advance the youth, peace and security agenda and champion youth participation for sustainable peace. This is an agenda that I hope the PBC can keep on championing, building on the momentum of resolution 2250 (2015).

The convening role of the PBC should be utilized even further, as it is one of the most important tools we have to foster greater coherence in international action and to help break some of the silos and address fragmentation. This in turn is a prerequisite for our ability to support genuine national leadership and ownership in peacebuilding processes.

Beyond these three topics that I have had a chance to touch upon, there are of course many more achievements that deserve the attention of this organ, not least within the country-specific configurations of the Commission. This year is another important year for the Commission, and I am very happy to see how the Commission continues to evolve under the very able stewardship of the Kenyan Ambassador.

Before concluding, I wish to pay tribute to my fellow PBC Chairs, as well as the representatives of the countries on our agenda and all the members of the Peacebuilding Commission. It has been a productive year for the Commission, and the successful steps could not have been taken without their very active engagement and dedicated support. In similar vein, I would be remiss if I did not dedicate a special word of thanks to Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Fernandez-Taranco and his entire team at the Peacebuilding Support Office for their steadfast support throughout the ninth session and their never-ending determination to advance the peacebuilding agenda at the United Nations.

I would just add a personal remark. I should like to thank the Security Council and its members for the very good interaction that I was able to have with all of them during the past year. This is the first time that I have had the possibility to brief the Council on this topic since the adoption of resolution 2282 (2016), on sustaining peace. I should like to this opportunity to congratulate the Council on adopting the resolution, and of course express the wish that its implementation be at the forefront of the Council's agenda, because I think it could represent a sea change in how we all deal with international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Skoog for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Kamau.

Mr. Kamau: Let me begin by thanking the French presidency of the Security Council for inviting the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to this briefing. The PBC takes these opportunities seriously. I also commend you, Sir, for the manner in which you have conducted the affairs of the Council.

At the outset, I wish to thank my Vice-Chairs — the Permanent Representative of Sweden, Ambassador Skoog, who is also the former Chair, and Ambassador Hahn Choonghee of the Republic of Korea — for their continued support as Vice-Chairs of the PBC. I would also like to recognize the continuing sterling work and commitment of all the configuration Chairs and the support that the PBC gets from its membership and the Peacebuilding Support Office.

Two months ago, on 27 April the General Assembly and the Security Council adopted two substantially identical resolutions — resolutions 70/262 and 2282 (2016), respectively — which, building on the excellent work done in 2015 by Ambassador Rosenthal and the Advisory Group of Experts on the peacebuilding review, recognize that sustaining peace is a shared task to be fulfilled by Governments and national stakeholders, but that it also needs sustained international attention

and assistance to countries affected by or at risk of conflict. Those resolutions emphasize, inter alia, that sustaining peace requires more coherence among the security, development, humanitarian and human rights actors of the United Nations system, as well as more coordination among General Assembly, Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. The resolutions also emphasize that sustaining peace requires a comprehensive approach that looks at all stages of conflict, with a particular focus on prevention and the need to address the root causes of conflict. They call upon the Peacebuilding Commission to fulfil a number of important functions in the areas of advocacy, coordination and partnership.

During the recently completed PBC West Africa tour of Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Senegal, the value of the important messages contained in these resolutions was reinforced by everything that we heard from all the stakeholders in all the countries that we visited. In my capacity as Chair, I would also like to echo Ambassador Skoog's statement that the support of the Security Council was mentioned and its contribution and commitment were recognized everywhere we went. I just want to commend the Council for that.

In view of the reaffirmed support of the General Assembly and the Security Council for the PBC, we have a unique opportunity to move forward the peacebuilding agenda. Allow me to outline key initiatives that the Commission has undertaken and our plans for the remainder of the current session.

First, with regard to the regional approach to address peacebuilding challenges and opportunities, the Commission convened two important meetings, in January and in April this year, to discuss trends and challenges to peacebuilding at the regional and subregional levels. Commission members, as well as additional countries from West Africa, heard presentations by the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Development Programme and the Peacebuilding Support Office on the most recent developments affecting peacebuilding in that region, and discussed thematic and cross-border initiatives. Both meetings were welcomed by Member States, as they represented important opportunities to make use of the convening role of the Commission as an inclusive platform for policy discussions on matters of peace.

It is my intention to use the mandate of the Commission, updated recently with new functions, to expand this approach to other regions, starting with Central Africa and East Africa in the second half of the year. Furthermore, on the margins of the meetings of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union earlier this year, I had informal conversations with members of the Peace and Security Council, and agreed that we should pursue deeper conversations with the African Union with a possibility of undertaking a visit to Addis Ababa and, even possibly, a retreat between the PBC and the PSC.

Secondly, with regard to the role of peacebuilding in post-Ebola recovery, humanitarian crises around the world have shown themselves to be great disruptors of peace and security. They disrupt and destroy communities, sometimes causing great loss of life and at other times uprooting entire communities, resulting in the displacement of people, with the consequence of triggering migration and refugees outflows.

As a follow-up, therefore, to the important work done by the Commission during the Ebola crisis, I recently undertook a visit to West Africa, where, together with a delegation composed of Chairs and Ambassadors of countries that are on the agenda, I assessed and witnessed first hand the road to recovery from the Ebola emergency in three of the most affected countries. What we witnessed was resolute determination and success in beating back a plague that was billed to be, at the onset, one of biblical proportions. Besides the tragic loss of life of thousands of people and the horrible suffering of many more, what Ebola has done is to expose the fragility of the affected countries and compounded and set back what were already difficulty economic and peacebuilding challenges.

But I also came away from West Africa with another impression — one of Governments and people determined to not only completely eradicate Ebola from their midst, but to also turn around their countries by building their economies, integrating their societies and nurturing sustainable peace. The gratitude expressed for the support received from the international community was everywhere we visited, and in that regard, as I said earlier, I must commend the Security Council for its swift and determined response, which drew the attention of the world to the onset of the crisis two years ago and the resultant and extensive support extended to the affected regions. We came away from the mission to West Africa convinced that

the countries were on a strong path to recovery, but that the sustained support of the international community was needed. We think that this should be kept in place for the next 12 to 24 months in order to totally complete Ebola recovery efforts.

Thirdly, on the issue of partnerships, a key value of the Commission rests in its ability to engage not only with such key partners as regional and subregional organizations, but also with international financial institutions and civil society organizations. We have witnessed the important value to transition that partnerships can give to all our peacebuilding efforts. Tomorrow, the Commission will convene its third annual session to discuss the topic of transition. That meeting represents an important opportunity for the Commission to strengthen its relations with key partners.

I wish to invite all Council members to actively participate in the discussion, particularly in view of the relevance of the topic for the Council's deliberations during the formation, review and drawdown of peacekeeping operations and special political operation mandates. In that connection, I wish to thank the President of the Security Council for his decision to attend the closing session.

As stated earlier, it is my intention to further strengthen the relations between the Commission and the African Union, as the Union is one of the PBC's key strategic partners, and I plan to visit, as I said, its headquarters in the second part of the year.

Partnerships also include cooperation between the PBC, General Assembly, Security Council and the Economic and Social Commission. I therefore look forward to the informal interactive dialogue that the President of the Security Council has organized for this morning, as well as to the joint event of the Economic and Social Council and the PBC scheduled for this coming Friday. This is truly a Peacebuilding Week for what we hope, in fact, will be a historic peacebuilding year.

Fourthly, and finally, with regard to working methods, 10 years after the creation of the PBC, Member States are calling for a more effective and efficient Commission. If it is to be able to fulfil its advisory role to the General Assembly and Security Council, and ultimately assist countries affected by conflict, the PBC needs to consider diversifying its working methods to enhance its efficiency and flexibility. It is my intention to dedicate the second half of the tenth session to convening discussions in the Organizational Committee on revising the provisional rules of the procedure of the PBC and exploring options to diversify its working methods.

We need to consider going beyond the rigid mechanisms of country configurations and be ready to respond in a flexible way to any request of interested countries, in accordance with the relevant provisions, while maintaining national ownership and leadership in peacebuilding. We also need to be able to consider cross-cutting and thematic issues. Most importantly, we need to work towards a peacebuilding whose members are engaged and ready to bring forward the work of the Commission. We therefore hope that the Security Council will give its concurrence and support on all the foregoing matters that I have mentioned.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Kamau for his briefing.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.